

FACT SHEET | A Healthy Lunch for Every Student

Budget for a Better Minnesota

Governor Dayton has proposed providing additional funding in the upcoming legislative session to ensure every child has access to a healthy school lunch. As many as 46 Minnesota school districts have policies that deny students access to a nutritious lunch, if those students do not have sufficient funds to pay for their meal. The Governor's budget proposal would ensure no Minnesota child is denied a healthy lunch.

A Healthy Lunch for Every Student

- **Helping 61,000 Kids.** Governor Dayton's proposal would ensure that 61,000 Minnesota children, who qualify for reduced-price lunches, will never be denied a healthy lunch.
- **Healthy Meals Are a Foundation of Student Success.** We cannot expect our students to succeed on an empty stomach – and studies prove it. When students have a healthy meal in school, discipline referrals have gone down by 50 percent. Meals lead to improved student attention, a reduction in visits to the school nurse, and better test scores.*
- **Helping Low-Income Families.** Under the Governor's budget proposal, a low-income household qualifying for reduced-price lunch could realize \$65-70 savings per child, if the student eats lunch at school every day. In some cases, a school-provided lunch may be the only meal the child eats for the remainder of the day.
- **Reducing Waste, Saving Time and Resources.** Ensuring no child is denied a healthy lunch will reduce the amount of food wasted or thrown away. Additionally, school districts will no longer have to track, underwrite, and send out reminder notices on "bad debts" for students who qualify for reduced-price lunches.

School Lunches – By the Numbers

40 cents	Cost of a reduced-price school lunch
61,000	Number of children who will benefit from Governor Dayton's budget proposal
\$65–\$70	Cost per child, per year to ensure every student receives a healthy school lunch
50%	Reduction in discipline referrals when students receive a healthy meal

***“No child in Minnesota should be denied a healthy lunch.
We cannot expect our students to succeed on an empty stomach.”***

– Governor Mark Dayton

*Minnesota Dept. of Children, Families & Learning report “School Breakfast Programs: Energizing the Classroom”